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23 October 1975

Outline of NIO/ME Briefing for NSCIC
Working Group, 22 October 1975

The Intelligence Community and the Arab-Israeli
Problem Since the October War

My understanding is that you are interested in the work the Intelligence Community has been doing concerning the Arab-Israeli problem. Rather than talk about current intelligence reporting and the wide variety of direct policy support projects we have been involved in, I would like to familiarize you with our basic research and analysis program. This is the area where I have concentrated much of my time as NIO for the Middle East because I am convinced that we in the Intelligence Community must do our research homework well before we can serve as policy-maker well. In turn I would very much appreciate your candid views as major policy-level consumers.

I. At the time of the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war it was distressingly clear to me that IC had not really done its research homework on the critical area of military analysis. Most of all there seemed to be a failure to integrate what was known in a way that would be useful to the policy-maker and provide a sound basis for current intelligence reporting. I would like to give you a few examples of what we have done to correct this situation.

NIAM: Arab-Israeli Military Capabilities, 14 November 1974

NIAM: Arab-Israeli Hostilities, 13 June 1975

New series initiated after October 1973 War to meet analytical deficiencies identified to provide analytical basis for decision-making. Formally reviewed every six months.

1. By analyzing such questions as:
 - a. What are absolute present strengths of major prospective combatants?
 - b. Who will "win" and at "what cost" under various circumstances?

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c. Prospects and realities of outside intervention.

2. We hope to provide a basis for:

a. Meaningful political, military, and aid contingency planning for another ME War.

b. An objective basis for military aid decisions in peacetime.

c. Sound basis for current intelligence reporting, prior to and during a crisis.

Arab-Israeli Handbook

Produced annually as a basic reference book on Arab-Israeli military situation - all the facts and figures - not estimative.

Purposes:

1. Provide a single set of IC coordinated figures reflecting best judgments of all agencies.

2. Statistical backup to NIAM.

II. We have also been looking at the question of "intent" and the political context.

1. SNIE, Next Steps in the Middle East - 27 March. Assessed situation in wake "suspension" of Kissinger mediating effort in March.

2. Follow-Up Memo to Holders of SNIE issued at another critical point in mid-July.

3. Presently drafting a SNIE on Syria's possible next steps.

4. Alert Memo produced July look at possible implications of Egypt's threat to not extend UNEF mandate.

5. Interagency Reports on "The Likelihood of Arab-Israeli Hostilities" using the Bayesian formula for quantitative probability analysis.

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On a bi-weekly basis senior analysts reviewed all traffic for indicators to confirm or deny several hypotheses and these factored into their progressive judgments using Bayesian methodology.

Provided

a. Consumers with an idea of the best individual thinking on this subject or IC.

b. Systematic approach to mass of raw data ensuring full attention to most salient facts.

6. NSSM Inputs - Major analytical inputs in last several months, including appraisals of Israeli arms requests.

III. Looking into the Future

1. Research Study by CIA (OPR) on The Arab World in the 1980s

Attempt to begin the process of developing a new conceptual framework for viewing the Middle East reflective of new trends now visible in area.

2. Military Balance in 1980s - Research program looking toward production of estimate recently launched. Spring 1976. See Prospectus attached.

Attachment
As stated

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